Mission: Wolf is a solar-powered nature center that provides a sanctuary for unwanted captive-born wolves and horses. We offer experiential education to inspire the public to become stewards of the earth. Since 1988 we have provided lifelong care for over 125 wolves, facilitated experiential wolf education with over 1 million people, and preserved 350 acres of pristine alpine habitat.

Historic Flood Flushes Wolf Ravine

On July 28, a rain for the ages fell at Mission: Wolf sanctuary. In the chaos of what has been dubbed the “Great Flood”, dozens of wooden gates, hundreds of fence posts, and thousands of feet of fence were pulled, ripped, and flattened by debris washed down the canyon. All resident animals found safety away from the damage, although it may take years before their homes can be completely restored.

All animals find safety, staff scramble for weeks to make repairs after deluge rips out 27 fence lines

Ysun (left) & Zeab (right) explore their riverswept homes after the storm. Many of the animals had small pools and a creek to play in for weeks—a sight unseen in the Mission: Wolf ravine for more than a decade.

Hay straps—it’ll work! For now.

Looking for buried fence. No need for fire bunkers this year

Sheep Creek at M:W Farm tears fence, flows onto road

Nashira hunts for snakes & salamanders

Sam—one wet staff

Illiamna—one wet wolf

see pages 4-5 for more
Wild Wolf Update
Researchers Combine Conflict Risk vs. Ecological Suitability for Wolves in Colorado

In an update on the wolf reintroduction planning process, Eric Odell, the species conservation program manager with Colorado Parks and Wildlife, cited a recent study assisting their efforts to select reintroduction locations.

To suggest suitable places for wolves, [the study] not only examines biological factors, like where the predators would find ample deer and elk populations. It also analyzes which local communities would tolerate wolves(...) The results, published in the journal “Global Ecology and Conservation,” found wolves could have the easiest time regaining a foothold in a portion of southwest Colorado.

Odell showed a map overlaying the results of the study with an area he called the “donut hole” for wolf reintroduction. Its boundaries are 60 miles from Colorado’s borders with Wyoming, Utah and New Mexico, minimizing the risk of the animal immediately migrating into other states. The Continental Divide forms the eastern limit. Odell said wildlife officials will release wolves into the region which stretches roughly between U.S. Route 24 and Montrose and runs between Glenwood Springs and Montrose in the north and Ridgway in the south.

Odell told commissioners the zone included many strong wolf habitats with a lower risk of livestock conflicts. He expects Colorado Parks and Wildlife managers will now start talking to communities in the area — like Aspen, Gunnison and Glenwood Springs — about the potential impacts."We want to have the highest likelihood of success so that we’re not dealing with depredations more than we would want to," Odell said. Odell clarified the region is not the only place the state will tolerate wolves. After reintroduction, wildlife managers expect the predators to exit its boundaries and travel to other parts of the state.

Since wolves are legendary travelers, Mark Ditmer, lead author of the study, said his maps should be seen as a guide to maintaining a viable wolf population. "I hope they’re useful as a tool for thinking through where to release wolves, and where they might be problems as the population expands," Ditmer said.

Brasch, Sam. “Here’s the general region where Colorado plans to reintroduce wolves.” CPR News, 9 Sept. 2022


Animal Updates
Zephir Memorial
On September 9th, Zephir, a stunning Arctic wolf who lived at the sanctuary for 13 years, quietly passed away during her sleep. She left behind her lifelong partner, Arrow.

The beginning of her life was challenging as she and her litter mates came down with parvovirus at a very young age. She did not show symptoms and beat the virus with gusto, finding comfort with a handsome male pup with pale green eyes named Arrow. He would be her life long partner. If you were lucky enough to spot them, you might see them together, snoozing or taking in the day from their perch.

Zephir has been an amazing teacher of patience and trust to the staff and visitors of Mission: Wolf. Though she will be missed, we are happy she is no longer in pain and can run free across the Rainbow Bridge. While death can be a time of sadness, it should also be a time of celebration and reflection of an amazing life fully lived—something surely true for Zephir.

-O. White

Obsidian Moves, Neighbor
Artemis Doesn’t Seem Bothered
In January, Mission: Wolf took in a young male wolf-dog who came to be named Obsidian. He spent a few months in an enclosure close to staff, gaining confidence and bonding with some of his caretakers, as highlighted in this summer’s Wolf Visions. In early summer, he was moved to a larger multi-acre enclosure close to the top of the hill where he can observe most of the sanctuary from above. He seems to be adjusting well to his new space and can often be seen bounding across the hillside to chase birds off his bones or letting out one of his deep, bellowing howls.

Meanwhile, 7-year-old Artemis moved to a new enclosure to make room for Obsidian. She has shown to be quite shy, so we were nervous to put her in a space closer to visitors and staff. To our pleasant surprise, we have enjoyed seeing her adjust seemingly with no fear or anxiety. Her striking color and mysterious missing leg have turned Artemis into something of a visitor favorite. We are happy to see both of them active, gaining confidence, and seeming content in their new spaces.

-M. Gaarde

Marty & Saurya Figuring Out Their Boundaries

As chronicled in this summer’s Wolf Visions, two of the sanctuary’s younger animals, Marty and Saurya, were introduced in hopes they could develop companionship. Both have strong personalities and can be a little hot-headed. Saurya especially has proven to be too intense for each of her three previous companions. While they often have arguments over bones, we remain hopeful they will continue to set their boundaries in a healthy way and live in harmony together for many years. When staff have run to check on them after one of these “conversations”, they’ve been found playing “chase” around their enclosure by then, tails wagging in innocence.

Although all Mission: Wolf’s animals are spayed & neutered, winter can still spark a lot of hormones, making everything more dynamic and emotional. We’re not holding our breath for Marty & Saurya, especially with her history of failed partnerships. If they get through their first winter together amicably, a successful life together might prove possible.

-M. Gaarde
Wolves of Mission: Wolf
· as described by staff ·

- Receive Wolf Visions to the wrong address?
- Receive more than one Wolf Visions?
- Wrong name on the address label?

Mission: Wolf migrated its donor database this year. We want to make sure all our supporters' information is correct. Visit missionwolf.org/contact-form or scan QR code here → to let us know any changes we need to make.

On the afternoon of July 28th, the skies opened up over Mission: Wolf. Almost four inches of rain fell in the span of just two hours, causing a 3-4 ft. deep river to run straight through the middle of the sanctuary. The water flowed into and flooded the ravine which crosses most of the wolf enclosures, taking rocks, trees, and other debris with it, which resulted in catastrophic damage to the wolves’ homes. Luckily, staff immediately noticed what was happening, ran into the middle of the storm, and ensured all animals were out of danger and secure.

All in all, 27 fence lines were severely damaged or destroyed. For weeks, staff and volunteers moved debris, pulled posts straight, stretched new fences, tied new wire, laid down new debris to secure ground mesh, and reinstalled adjacent wood gates. New “break” points have been engineered where the fences cross the water. This way, if another storm tries to wipe the wolves’ fences out, it will only take a little portion of the fence with it and nothing more.

Within the following month of the flood, two significant rain events came along to test our nerves (and temporary fixes). Both times, anxious as ever, staff ran out into the downpour, relieved to find the chain link holding strong. Additionally, the seemingly never-ending amount of rain being dumped on the sanctuary meant a steady hum of water through the wolf enclosures for weeks, giving consistent enrichment to the wolves in a way seldom seen nowadays. It was a special treat for staff to hear the babbling creek throughout the background of their day.

After bringing the Mission: Wolf network of supporters up to speed, an overwhelming amount of love from all across the world poured in. Offers to come out and give time; fundraisers started on the sanctuary’s behalf; discounts on building materials from local businesses; tens of thousands of monetary donations online—we are still in awe and feeling very humbled from it all.

Thanks to the generosity of several local organizations and individual donors, we now have an abundance of fencing tools and materials, enabling more staff and volunteers to work at one time, allowing for more repairs overall. Our local friends at Valley ACE Hardware donated several thousand dollars’ worth of rebar and lumber right off the bat to get us through initial repairs. The good people at Steelock Fencing delivered a semi-load of fence material to the refuge at around half the normal cost. A former staff member working for Living Design Studios in Erie has organized a deal for the wolves that will provide for 50+ prefabricated steel gates at a similar, significantly reduced price.

We send howl after howl of gratitude to these organizations and the hundreds of you who donated generously to the rebuilding effort. The wolves are forever grateful. It gives us so much joy to see this abundant outpour of love from all supporters, donating their time, working hands, materials and dollars. In a world mired by negativity and division, we are swimming in unity and hope!

We anticipate this being “life” for us until at least next fall, perhaps into 2024. One by one, as weather allows, all 27 damaged fence lines and the surrounding infrastructure will be made structurally sound again. We are confident the animals will have new homes that are safer and more secure than they were before.

With so much moisture, one thing’s for sure: the Mission: Wolf flora did not suffer throughout the summer. The sanctuary was greener than most have ever seen it with grass more than two-feet tall, potato crops thriving, wild flowers in abundance, and daily sightings of new and interesting insects. The tall vegetation really enhanced their natural ability to blend in. To the gentle dismay of staff and visitors to the sanctuary, spotting wolves from afar became quite the challenge!
Join the Team

At Mission: Wolf, we operate on solar power, grow food in geodesic domes, and build with recycled materials. We value education, sustainability, and improving relationships between people, animals, and the world around us. Around 5-10 on-site staff give their time to the sanctuary and in turn are provided with a roof over their head, food to eat, and a multinational community to be part of. We live together in a 3-acre eco-village designed to be an inspiring example of sustainable living practices.

The sanctuary is in particular need of skilled, competent individuals to join our dedicated team of Sanctuary Caretakers. The wolves don't need a lot other than food, water, and a clean space to live. Maintaining the facility & vehicles, operating the office, and educating the public are full-time jobs.

Don't forget to name “Mission: Wolf” as your non-profit of choice!

Support the Wolves

Each year, volunteers give over 30,000 hours of work to the wolves. A multinational family of volunteer staff live on-site 24/7

Mission: Wolf is proud of its world-wide community of supporters built over three decades of work. To honor every cent, we have built a sustainable, solar-powered facility to serve our mission with as minimum overhead as possible.

Through the following campaigns, your dollar goes even further.

Please consider donating this holiday season to one of the giving opportunities listed below:

STRETCH YOUR DONATION THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Mission: Wolf is proud of its world-wide community of supporters built over three decades of work.

To honor every cent, we have built a sustainable, solar-powered facility to serve our mission with as minimum overhead as possible.

Since its inception in 2010, Colorado Gives Day has raised $307 million for Colorado nonprofits including Mission: Wolf, making it among the most successful giving days in the nation. In 2020, more than $50 million was raised during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The 82,988 donors surpassed all expectations by giving 230,504 individual donations and helping 2,874 Colorado nonprofits continue the good work they do.

Those who give on Tuesday, December 6 will find their donations boosted by a $1.6 million Incentive Fund—only possible thanks to the Community First Foundation, FirstBank, and support from many Colorado businesses stepping up to finance the Fund.

Giving Tuesday is a global day of giving. To help raise awareness of charitable causes and encourage donors' generosity, Meta/Facebook will match $8 million in qualifying donations made on Facebook during Giving Tuesday.

Matching on a first-come, first-serve basis begins on Tuesday, November 30, at 8am ET.

Follow Mission: Wolf on Facebook & look for its fundraising post on November 30 to participate in Giving Tuesday:

Don't forget to name “Mission: Wolf” as your non-profit of choice!

Wet Mountain Valley Community Foundation Spirit Campaign - Ends December 31

Mission: Wolf has participated in the Wet Mountain Valley Community Foundation Spirit Campaign for over 10 years. As before, the WMVCF will partially match all individual donations to a Custer County non-profit of your choice between November 15 and December 31.

In 2021, Mission: Wolf supporters were responsible for over $15,000 in total donations—a record for the sanctuary!

To participate: · mail the form below to the address listed · visit wmvcf.org · or scan the QR code here

Don’t forget to name “Mission: Wolf” as your non-profit of choice!

*Visit missionwolf.org/staff or email us at info@missionwolf.org for more information & to apply for a staff position

**Visit missionwolf.org/staff or email us at info@missionwolf.org for more information & to apply for a staff position**
Although wolves don’t make good pets... they do look stunning on the family room wall.
Mission: Wolf operates on contributions from Wolf Caretaker members

With roughly 25 hungry canines to feed, we go through around 500 pounds of raw meat each week

Please consider becoming a member of the Mission: Wolf family today and help keep the wolves happy, healthy, and well-fed!

Your contribution goes directly toward the care of the animals as well as the education of thousands of visitors.

Wolf membership packets make GREAT GIFTS for birthdays, holidays and memorials.

We send you a tax-deductible receipt and your friend or loved one receives a wolf membership packet as a gift from you in the mail.

Visit mission-wolf-store.myshopify.com to order, or use the form below to sponsor a canine of Mission: Wolf

included in a Mission: Wolf membership packet:

- Personalized certificate honoring your annual membership
- Sample of naturally shed wolf fur
- 8x10 color photo of your wolf
- Subscription to Wolf Visions
- Mission: Wolf decal/sticker
- Biography of your wolf

Please send this form with cash or check to:
Mission: Wolf
PO Box 1211
Westcliffe, CO 81252

Visit mission-wolf-store.myshopify.com for credit cards orders

*We believe Sustaining Members will ensure Mission: Wolf is set for the future through consistent, monthly support. If you would like to become a Sustaining Member, visit missionwolf.org/donate-now and choose "monthly"*